

"Nine years ago on September 11th, I was at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC, only a short distance from the Pentagon, when the attack occurred. As Members and staff fled the Capitol grounds, not knowing if an attack on Congress was imminent, I remember seeing the smoke rising from the Pentagon in an otherwise clear blue sky.

"September 11th changed America, and it tragically changed the lives of thousands of families who lost loved ones. On this ninth anniversary, I once again extend my condolences to the victims of the attacks and my deep gratitude to all the first responders who selflessly sacrificed their lives and their health for those who survived.

"While we mourn the loss of victims in the Pentagon, New York City, and in Pennsylvania, it is also important to remember that the values that make us a free people were also attacked. On this anniversary I hope all Americans recommitment themselves to protect and defend our core values of freedom, justice, tolerance, and equal opportunity - the values that make this the greatest country on Earth.

"Let us all remember September 11th and work to keep America a land of freedom and opportunity for all."